



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
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### **North Dakota Observes National Mammography Day *State Health Department Stresses Importance of Detecting Cancer Early***

BISMARCK, N.D. – In observance of National Mammography Day on October 20<sup>th</sup>, the North Dakota Department of Health is urging women older than 40 to schedule their regular mammograms, according to Mary Ann Foss, state coordinator of the *Women's Way* program for the Department of Health.

Each year, National Mammography Day is observed on the third Friday of Breast Cancer Awareness Month to remind women to get an annual mammogram.

"Annual mammograms lower the number of deaths caused by breast cancer by more than 30 percent," Foss said. "A mammogram is the best way to detect breast cancer early, when it's most treatable."

The American Cancer Society estimates that during 2006, more than 450 North Dakota women will discover they have breast cancer. Breast cancer is most easily treated and cured when found early. The best way to find breast cancer early is through yearly mammograms and breast exams at a clinic.

According to Foss, many women do not get annual mammograms because they are uninsured or underinsured. The state's *Women's Way* Program may provide a way to pay for most breast cancer screenings and is available to eligible North Dakota women.

*Women's Way* is North Dakota's Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. Since its inception in 1997, *Women's Way* has provided screening to 8,150 North Dakota women, resulting in the detection of 118 cases of breast cancer.

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Visit the health department home page at [www.ndhealth.gov](http://www.ndhealth.gov).

To learn more about *Women's Way*, call 1-800-44 WOMEN or visit the webpage at [www.ndhealth.gov/womensway](http://www.ndhealth.gov/womensway). For more information about National Mammography Day, contact Mary Ann Foss, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2333.

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